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# THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA AND THE KING OF FRANCE, 1665-1700

By

PAUL WALDEN BAMFORD

The Order of Malta<sup>1</sup> was one of the major maritime powers of the Mediterranean in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and one of the few powers with which French kings had no wars. French relations with the Order were generally amicable. Kings of France, and notably Louis XIV, not only allowed their subjects to join the Order, but actively encouraged them to do so by granting privileges and diplomatic posts, and by giving commissions in their armed forces to Frenchmen who were Knights. In consequence, the roster of the members of the Order included many of the first families in public life in France, among them such distinguished families as the De la Salle, Forbin, Tourville, Noailles, and Rochecouart. The appeal the Order had, and the powerful connections possessed by some Knights included in its fighting class was evident in the reign of Louis XIV when several members of two great rival families of the period, the Colbert and the Louvois, became *Chevaliers de Malte*. Noble families sometimes reserved places in the Order for younger sons on the very day of birth, thus maximizing the seniority of their infant-aspirant to the Knighthood of Saint John.

The fighting Knights of Malta were crusaders; their Order preserved and cherished and epitomized the tradition of crusading zeal. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Knights were still the most active and tenacious of Islam's Mediterranean enemies. They thought of them-

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<sup>1</sup> The Order of the Knights of St. John (Hospitallers) of Jerusalem, transferred successsively to Cyprus (1291) and to Rhodes (1308), was finally forced to evacuate Rhodes under the terms of a capitulation to the Turks in 1522, and eight years later received Malta as a fief from Charles V, being known thereafter as the Order of Malta or *la Religion de Malte*. The Abbé René Aubert de Vertot's *Histoire des chevaliers hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1772) in seven volumes is celebrated (Chéruef, Zeller, Godechot) for errors, but has utility; recent histories of the modern Order at Malta include R. Cohen, *Knights of Malta, 1523-1798* (London, 1920); Jacques Godechot, *Histoire de Malte* ("Que sais-je") (Paris, 1952); C.-É. Engel, *L'Ordre de Malte en Méditerranée, 1530-1798* (Monaco, 1957).

selves as "the élite of Christianity."<sup>2</sup> The historian of the Knights, the Abbé Vertot, referred to them as a "fighting force composed of the most noble blood of the Christian world."<sup>3</sup> They vowed "to defend the [Roman Catholic] Church in perpetuity, [and] never to draw the sword against a Christian nation."<sup>4</sup> For them the objects of campaigns at sea were the protection of the trade of Christians and the elimination of Infidels by capture or conversion, using as their principal medium the sword. One of the Knights, exhorting his brothers to duty, underscored their fighting purposes in observing that it was the duty of every Knight "to defend the Faith against Infidels, [and] to destroy pirates and Mohammedans."<sup>5</sup> The Knights of the Order of St. John conducted relentless religious war with Infidels during the two and three-quarters centuries they were established at their mid-Mediterranean Malta base.<sup>6</sup>

Yet many Knights held administrative or diplomatic posts in princely or royal governments, or served as administrators in overseas colonies, such as Nouvelle France. Many served in the armed forces of European Catholic powers. The armed forces of the Kings of France included many Knights of Malta, and Knights were specially numerous in Louis XIV's *Corps des Galères*. In 1674, for example, about two-thirds of Louis' galleys were under the command of Knights of Malta.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the last third of the seventeenth century they always constituted a comfortable majority of the captains; nearly all of the captains who rose to the rank of squadron commander after 1680 were Knights. The effective commander-in-chief of the galley Corps for two decades after

<sup>2</sup> *Archives de la Marine*, series D<sup>1</sup> volume 18, folio 163, hereafter cited as D<sup>1</sup> 18 Marine fol 163.

<sup>3</sup> Vertot (edition of 1761), V, 300-301.

<sup>4</sup> Godechot, p. 37. cf. Vertot, VI, "Status de L'ordre de Saint Jean de Jerusalem," titre I, "De la Regle: Costume," pp. 14-15; III, "Donation de l'Isle de Malte" (1530), 422-23, 425; and the "Acte du Serment Fait au Viceroy de Sicile par les Ambassadeurs de Malthe," 429-30.

<sup>5</sup> Chevalier Luc de Boyer d'Argens, *Réflexions politiques sur l'État et les Devoirs des Chevaliers de Malte* (La Haye, 1739), p. 115. On the vows and obligations of Knights: Vertot, refs cited above; Godechot, pp. 36-7, 41; Engel, pp. 79-86.

<sup>6</sup> The Order appears to have made no treaty with the Infidel after the capitulation at Rhodes in 1522. *Recueil d'Actes internationaux de l'Empire Ottoman* Paris, 1897), pp. 28, 401.

<sup>7</sup> B<sup>8</sup> 8 Marine fols 1-2.

1679, the *Lieutenant Général des Galères & des Armées navales du Roi*, Jacques de Noailles, was a Knight and commander in the Order, and he later served as its ambassador at the court of France. The title *Vice-amiral du Levant*, revived in 1689, was conferred on another distinguished Knight of Malta, the Comte de Tourville, commander of the combined fleets and later *Maréchal de France*. Notwithstanding variations in the proportion of Knights in different ranks at different times, they dominated Louis XIV's Galley Corps.<sup>8</sup>

The question as to why Louis XIV commissioned so many Knights of Malta in his newly organized and expanding Galley Corps after 1665 seems, on the surface at least, readily answerable. Louis XIV wanted a navy in a hurry. He needed officers for his fighting fleet, and he preferred to be served by noblemen. Knights of Malta were noblemen—men entering its fighting ranks were expected to furnish proofs of noble ancestry unless special dispensation was obtained—and most of them acquired sea-going experience on the galleys or vessels of the Order. Some Knights not only had experience, but also had distinguished records as fighting men. Moreover, it was traditional for Kings of France to use Knights of Malta as officers in their Mediterranean navy; Louis' royal predecessors frequently appointed them to serve in various governmental capacities. The Order had much to commend it as a school for officers; indeed, it was used with such frequency by the Catholic maritime powers, and especially by France as a recruiting ground for naval officers that the Order of Malta came to be considered a veritable *école de guerre navale*. Louis was thoroughly convinced that Knights of Malta should

<sup>8</sup> For lists of French galley officers, usually in the order of seniority: *Dépôt des Cartes et Plans* hereinafter cited *Dep.C.P.*) 49(272) "Extrait... Sur les 25 Galeres Commandees par M. le Baylly de Noailles (1694), signe Montmort; *Bibliothèque Nationale* (hereinafter cited as "BN"), *Nouv. Acq. Fr.*, 21381, fols 17-21, "Liste generale des officiers" (1692); B<sup>6</sup> 12 Marine fols 32-35 (list for 1680). Officers who were Knights were customarily, though not always designated with the title Chevalier. Confirmation of the connection with the Order can in many cases be obtained in the Archives de la Marine, series C<sup>7</sup> (personal dossiers of officers), or in standard published sources on French biography and nobility or in volume VII of Vertot, comprising incomplete lists of Knights of Malta arranged by *langue*, or branch. Lists for the individual *langues* are arranged either alphabetically or chronologically (by date of admission to the Order) in Vertot; the writer is indebted to T. E. Hall and R. C. Adams for preparing an alphabetical cross-referenced card-file of those Knights listed in Vertot.

not only be employed, but should be given preference over other persons when men were selected to serve as officers on galleys.<sup>9</sup> In 1672 the Duc de Vivonne was instructed that all the men proposed henceforth as officer candidates should be experienced men, "should have served on the galleys of Malta, and should be members of the Order. . . . His Majesty desires to have aboard his galleys the greatest possible number of Knights of Malta."<sup>10</sup>

There were doubtless many reasons why Knights, for their part, chose to serve on Louis' galleys even in preference to serving on the galleys of their Order. Many Knights with pious inclinations, seeing infidels among Louis XIV's enemies, must have reasoned that in taking service on his galleys they would have a double opportunity, the chance to serve both Church and King and thus combine the two traditions of service that French nobility customarily found most acceptable. Other men, having less exalted motives, no doubt judged the chances of advancement to be good on Louis' galleys. They were good, especially in the decade of the sixties and early seventies, when expansion of the navy was creating new and immediate needs for experienced officers. On the galleys of the Order itself, noble status being no distinction, seniority counted for almost everything. But in Louis' Galley Corps, on the other hand, in the early days of expansion, Knights of Malta had preference in promotions. Furthermore, as any man who bothered to inquire could be informed, the pay of officers in Louis' galleys was better than the pay of officers serving under sail. There was also some attraction in the fact that Marseille, the largest commercial port in all of France, was the base for Louis' galley Corps after 1665, offering many attractions which the isolation of the Order's base on Malta could not afford. Some Knights may have been attracted by the regularity of Louis' service under oars; unlike most of his sailing ships, Louis' galleys customarily campaigned every year and their officers were rarely unemployed, as officers in the sailing navy sometimes were for years on

<sup>9</sup> On the expressed preferences of Louis XIV and Colbert for Knights of Malta as galley officers: BN, Nouv. Acq. Fr., 21307; B° 4 Marine fol 66; B° 12 Marine fols 26, 42; Jean-Baptiste Colbert, *Lettres, instructions et mémoires*, ed. Pierre Clément (8 vols in 10, Paris, 1861-82), III, pt 1, 143.

<sup>10</sup> B° 4 Marine fol 66.

end, on partial pay if they were lucky. In short, some men were attracted to the galleys, as Ernest Lavisse believed, by good pay and long vacations every year, and the fact that galleys never made "those wretched voyages of two or three years in distant seas."<sup>11</sup> With varied motives, certainly, noble Knights of Malta chose service in the galleys of the King of France in preference even to service in the fighting forces of their Order.

To the extent that Louis did send expeditions against North African principalities or into the eastern Mediterranean, his interests and objectives seemed to coincide with those of the Order. Louis sometimes fought the Infidel as did the Order of Malta itself, sometimes ran down privateers in collaboration with vessels of the Order, or dispatched his own expeditions against the Moslem city-states of North Africa. But Louis seldom concerned himself with the "Infidel" privateers based in the eastern Mediterranean with which the Order was very much more preoccupied. When Louis did dispatch one of his rare expeditions to Levantine waters, he used some flag other than his own, usually, to dissimulate his purposes. Considered overall, Louis' campaigns against Moslems lacked both the constancy and zeal of those conducted by the Order.

Louis had many non-religious purposes in view, the pursuit of which interfered, and was sometimes antithetical to the interests of crusading Roman Catholic Christianity. In fact, Louis was officially an ally of the Ottoman Turk, whose collaboration he found useful in humbling or diverting central European Habsburgs. The Catholic Habsburgs, and notably His Most Catholic Majesty the King of Spain were numbered among Louis' many enemies. The campaign instructions issued to the commanders of his galleys usually specified, in both peace and war, especially during the last two decades of the seventeenth century, that every effort must be made to find and engage (or in peacetime, humble) the Spanish galleys. Such instructions were based on Louis' belief in the strategic vulnerability of Spain's holdings on the European continent. The scattered possessions of Spain in

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<sup>11</sup> Ernest Lavisse, "Sur les Galères du Roi," *Revue de Paris*, IV, part 6, 15 novembre 1897, 227. Cf B<sup>4</sup> 13 Marine fol 220.

the southern Netherlands, central Europe, Italy, Sicily and Sardinia demanded communication links across the western Mediterranean. Spanish galleys maintained that link, campaigning to and fro between Spain and Italy with regularity. In addition to the usual functions of coast defense, and the suppression of piracy and privateering, Spanish galleys carried troops for Spanish armies and shuttled back and forth carrying envoys and funds; they were vital to the courier service of Spain's European Empire. "Spain has always regarded her galleys as a bond between her scattered Mediterranean possessions," said Louis. A defeat for Spanish galleys, he said, will render Spain "incapable of opposing my enterprises."<sup>12</sup> Knights of Malta accepting service on Louis XIV's galleys thus found themselves campaigning as often against the Catholic King of Spain as against the Infidel.

There were other difficulties for Knights serving on the galleys of the King of France. Many Knights who were Spanish or Italian-born took service in the naval forces of the King of Spain. Hence when French and Spanish fleets of galleys campaigned against each other, or fought one another, Knights of Malta were pitted against each other, brother against brother. Such engagements were bound to have effects that were the opposite of those the Knights had vowed to seek. They aided, rather than confined or injured Infidels, as Knights had sworn to do. Fighting among themselves they only strengthened the one enemy they had obligated themselves by vows to fight implacably.

Problems of still another sort faced conscientious Knights. One notable example was afforded by Louis' punishment of Genoa for showing friendship and for giving aid to the naval forces of the King of Spain. What thoughts, one wonders, did the Knights in Louis' service entertain when they found themselves bombarding Catholic Genoa in 1684 to punish that Republic for aiding Spain, and commanded on that occasion by that intractable old Huguenot Admiral Abra-

<sup>12</sup> Quote from *Dep.C.P.*, 3 (84), *Instructions*, signé Louis, dtd 1 août 1696. Cf Armand du Plessis, Cardinal de Richelieu, *Testament politique*, ed Louis André (Paris, 1947), pp. 405-15, a significant exposition of Spain's strategic situation; *Dep.C.P.*, 3 (84), *Recueil des Ordres, Instructions*, Louis XIV to Noailles, dated 16 dec 1679, 10 juin 1680 and letter dtd 1 août 1694.



ham Duquesne. Louis XIV no doubt desired that loyalty to him take precedence over any other loyalties among the officers in his fleet, and the presence with the fleet off Genoa of no less a personage than the Marquis de Seignelay, his Minister of Marine, must have seemed a sufficient guarantee of that.<sup>13</sup>

The existence of conflicting loyalties and troubled consciences among the Knights of Malta was made apparent in a little volume published in the eighteenth century by the Chevalier d'Argens. He pointed out to his brother Knights, in no uncertain terms, that if they had any intention of doing their duty as Knights, they should stay at Malta and serve under the banner of the Order itself; they should not take service, he said, in the armies and navies of European princes. When you go "to fight against the French, the Germans and English," he said, you do not fulfill your duties as a Knight. You vowed

to war against the Infidels, not to spill the blood of Christians or to butcher your own brothers . . . If you consider carefully how many unjust wars are fought by Christian princes, how many men they send off to their deaths, sometimes simply to satisfy their personal hatred or ambition, you cannot but cherish the service of a state [the Order of Malta] that makes war only to defend the Faith, and instead of taking part in the criminal disputes of Christians, sees with regret the passion associated so inappropriately with glorious names and love of *la patrie*.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to their obligations to their Order and their faith, the Knights of Malta had certain special obligations to the Kings of Spain. They became vassals of the Spanish Crown in 1530 when Malta, Gozo, and certain other territories, were accepted from Charles V by the Grand Master of the Order, Villiers de l'Isle Adam in his own name and in that of all the knights. The contract was accepted as being binding on the Grand Master and the Order and all the Knights in perpetuity.<sup>15</sup> Malta was received by the Order

<sup>13</sup> B° 12 Marine fols 151-53, 268; Charles de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine française* (Paris, 1899-1934), VI, 2-4.

<sup>14</sup> D'Argens, pp. 116-117. Cf. Godechot, pp. 37-41.

<sup>15</sup> "Donation de l'Isle de Malthe", dtd 24 mars 1530, printed in Vertot, III, 422-29.



"as a noble fief, *libre et franc*." The Order was only obligated to give, on All Saints' Day each year to the King of Spain or to his Viceroy in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (that then belonged to the Crown of Spain), one falcon in recognition of their vassalage. The obligation of military service was specifically renounced by Charles, but his contract was insistent on the vassalage. Malta was not intended as a gift. By the contract terms each Grand Master in succession at his investiture acknowledged vassalage to Spain. At the succession of each new King of Spain, the Order renewed its feudal contract and its vassalage. At all these times and in all these ways each Grand Master and each Knight acknowledged vassalage, and thereby incurred the vassal's obligation not to attack or harm his lord, re-enforced in their case by religious vows forbidding them ever to attack a Christian prince.<sup>16</sup>

Charles' *Donation* described the fief of Malta as a place where the Knights could "carry on the functions of their Religion in repose for the general advantage," and from which "to employ their forces and their arms against the perfidious enemies of the Holy Faith."<sup>17</sup> That was the object that Charles had in view in granting this important fief. His grant erected an important mid-Mediterranean obstacle to the free movement of the maritime forces of the infidel; it conferred a site for the establishment of a bastion and a base from which maritime offensives against the Infidels could be launched.<sup>18</sup>

Of course such feudal contracts as this were broken countless times by feudatories in medieval times. Yet when fiefs were accepted and religious vows were taken in the sixteenth century by a tradition-bound religious Order of noblemen such as the militia of St. John, having as the very object of their existence the maintenance of Christian ideals and the defence of their Holy Faith in accordance with the high-

<sup>16</sup> *Donation*, Vertot, III, 422 seq.

<sup>17</sup> *Donation*, Vertot, III, 422-423.

<sup>18</sup> *Donation*, Vertot, III, 424. Charles V desired to obtain direct military aid for the defense of Tripoli in compensation for his grant, and also an engagement under which the Order would "join its galleys to the imperial fleet for all operations in the Mediterranean," but "many Knights" balked because "that condition was in contradiction with the statutes of the Order that forbade combat with any Christian state." Godechot, p. 41.

est crusading ideals of medieval Christianity, one could expect such obligations to be taken seriously, to have the binding character that religious vows were supposed to have. Clearly, as long as the Knights held Malta as their base of operations and their home, fealty as well as religious vows forbade them giving hurt to Spain by war or any other means.

Once signed and solemnly approved by the Papacy, this contract and its obligations had significant implications for the relations of the Order with the Kings of France. Barriers were erected that forbade the Knights from serving in the armed forces of French Kings when French forces were used, as they normally and very often were used before the eighteenth century, to injure the interests or weaken the strength of the Kings of Spain. Yet scores and hundreds of French-born knights did serve in the galleys and other forces of Kings of France, including those of Louis XIV. One is led logically to ask: Is it possible that all those Knights were guilty of the offence of breaking sworn vows and promises?

Evidence that seems to bear on the answer to this question is implicit in the conduct and outcome of campaigns carried on by French galleys against the Kings of Spain in the seventeenth century, and especially in those of the last few decades of that century. A survey of the campaigns of French and Spanish galleys shows that battles were surprisingly infrequent. Between 1665 and the end of the century, Louis XIV developed the largest fleet of galleys in Europe; he had on hand at once, in the early 1690's, no less than fifty galleys, and between fifteen and forty of his galleys were ordinarily employed in campaigns each year during the three decades 1670-1700. But never, in all those thirty years of campaigning did Louis XIV's galleys fight the galleys of the King of Spain. Since Louis' galley squadrons were often commanded by Knights of Malta, and large numbers of Knights were always found among the senior officers of the Corps, one is led to ask whether or not this failure to fight meant that Louis' commanders purposely avoided combat with the Spanish enemy? On the face of it, that does seem possible; yet consider the evidence.

The notable failure of the French to fight the Spanish galleys is made more remarkable inasmuch as the Spanish were often out of port in the western Mediterranean, and almost all the French campaigns with galleys in that Sea were conducted within the confines of that same restricted area, the Mediterranean west of Italy. That section of the inland sea was fringed by Spanish ports and territories, or by ports that harbored Spanish galleys willingly. Spanish galleys or those in the pay of Spain were based on both its eastern and its western shores. Of course part of the blame for the infrequency of fights might be placed on Spain and Spanish galley officers. Spanish commanders must have carried orders to run and not to fight, since their usual and most important function was that of carrying precious cargo and communications; furthermore, the number of galleys in each of Spain's squadrons, divided as they usually were between several different bases, must frequently have been numerically inferior to the squadrons with which the French campaigned. Numerical inferiority might have been an added reason for the Spaniard to eschew a fight. It ought also to be said, in explanation of the rarity of fights, that it was difficult if not impossible, from the standpoint of logistics, for French galleys to remain on station very long as "pickets" off an unfriendly shore, such as the western coasts of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, or in the waters off Sardinia, the Balearic Islands, or off Spain itself. On the other hand it was easy for the French to cruise off north Italian coasts, as in Genoese waters, where Spanish galleys were seen frequently. Naturally, the commanders of French galleys had orders to lengthen as much as possible their stay in the waters where their enemy might appear, since the importance of finding the Spanish galleys was clearly understood in France. Ships under sail could, and often did accompany French galley squadrons on campaigns, to carry victuals and thus extend their radius of operation. In some years two separate fleets of French galleys campaigned concurrently on the coasts of Spain and Italy with instructions to find and fight the Spanish galleys. But year after year, French galleys failed to achieve the objective of interrupting Spanish communica-

tions, the most important single service they could be called on to perform.

There were occasions, as in 1696, when French galleys did encounter Spanish galleys at sea in time of war, but the French commander failed to attack even though the Spaniard stood in close, in apparent willingness to engage.<sup>19</sup> French commanders concerned excused themselves by asserting that the Spanish could not be attacked because they were slightly (one or two galleys) more numerous than the French. Louis XIV showed remarkable restraint in dealing with such officers. In some navies even admirals have faced the firing squad for less; surprisingly, Louis XIV did little more than remonstrate and criticize. In some cases Louis did not even relieve the officers concerned of their commands! In expressing "indignation," as well he might, he merely pointed to "the bad maxims that seem to be established in the *Corps des Galères*, making decisions dependent on having one galley more or less" than the enemy;<sup>20</sup> such maxims were "unjustified," said Louis. His Minister of Marine intoned that "His Majesty does not require the impossible." On orders from the King the Minister sent an "information copy" of the following Instruction to young Louis de Rochechouart, Duc de Mortemart:

it contributes to the glory and reputation of His [Majesty's] arms if his commanders profit from occasions when they can attack the enemy with some chance of success. . . His Majesty does not mean to suggest that 15 of his galleys must attack 22 of the enemy; but 15 galleys cannot justifiably avoid combat against 18, or 30 against 35, and so on, in proportion. This clarification of His Majesty's intentions that I am giving you will serve in the future, if you please [as an order] if such occasions should [again] arise.<sup>21</sup>

In fairness to Louis' officers, it might also be observed that over the years they sometimes did receive instructions of a sort that could have dampened the spark of fighting

<sup>19</sup> BN, *Mss.Fr.* 9177, "Relations de la Recontre des Galeres du Roy avec Celles d'Espagne sur les Costes de Catalogne (Sept 1696). Twenty-five French galleys encountered twenty-six Spanish on that occasion. Cf. *Ms.Fr.* 6172 (Portulan), tome I.

<sup>20</sup> B<sup>e</sup> 17 Marine fol 263.

<sup>21</sup> B<sup>e</sup> 17 Marine "Instruction que Le Roy veut estre mise en mains du Sr. Duc de Mortemart, Général des Galeres," dtd 25 juillet 1685, and fol 263.

enterprise. At times (as in 1679) they were told to avoid combat with the enemy unless he was in force "nearly equal" (*à peu près égal*) to themselves.<sup>22</sup> In 1692, for example, the commander of the King's galleys received such cautionary counsels, being ordered to undertake a particular enterprise only if he could do so "without too much risk" (*sans un trop grand danger*); that same commander was also warned not to allow himself to be surprised by the enemy, or obliged to fight an unequal fight.<sup>23</sup> After having issued such instructions the King might be considered to have obligated himself to tolerate some timidity or lack of enterprise, at least in the conduct of that particular commander; perhaps he encouraged caution with excessive frequency. Perhaps Louis' own instructions to his officers had been such as to require that his commanders be informed, as one was told in 1696, that the enemy galleys were known to be "equal in number to yours."<sup>24</sup>

Yet Louis' own instructions can hardly be held responsible for the many occasions when French galley commanders showed lack of enterprise. As early as the spring of 1677 galley officers incurred the displeasure of both the King and his Minister of Marine for their seeming lack of competence and vigor, in the face of both the weather and the enemy. Louis was persuaded, said his Minister of Marine, "that the established (*ancienne*) conduct of galley officers is a bit too circumspect, and that they have excessive fears about exposing the galleys [to bad weather]. You must get out of this habit of behavior," said the minister. You must "overcome by your application and vigilance the bad impression that galley officers have given of themselves up to now."<sup>25</sup> Ten years later the minister was still writing to squadron commanders in the following terms:

You can assure M. le Chevalier de Breteuil that knowing as I do the extraordinary precautions with which he is accustomed to navigate, I am always doubtful that he really tries to get to the

<sup>22</sup> Dep. C.P., 3(84), Louis XIV to Noailles, 16 decembre 1679.

<sup>23</sup> Dep. C.P., 3(84), Louis XIV to Noailles, 14 avril 1692.

<sup>24</sup> Dep. C.P., 3(84), Louis XIV to Noailles, 1 août 1696.

<sup>25</sup> B<sup>9</sup> Marine fol 92; cf. fols 69, 87.

coast of Languedoc [first stage of the route to Spain]; to serve the King well, one must sometimes be less prudent.<sup>26</sup>

Probably the rarity of combats between French and Spanish galleys can partly be explained by lack of "enterprise" and "excessive caution" on the part of Louis' officers.

But such behavior did not derive from any lack of competence or courage on the part of officers; the record itself tends to prove that Louis' Knights of Malta were well endowed in those respects. Admittedly their record against the galleys of the King of Spain was poor, but against other enemies, including some that were considered more dangerous than Spanish galleys, the record of some of Louis' galley commanders was excellent. On the Atlantic seaboard, for example, where galleys were reputed to be least effective, the record of Louis' galley commanders against non-Spanish enemies was remarkable. A small squadron of six French galleys operating out of Ostend, commanded by M. le Chevalier de la Pailletrie (a Knight of Malta), attacked and captured a Dutch warship of 56 guns within view of eleven other Dutch men-of-war in 1702.<sup>27</sup> In those same northeastern seaboard waters, the Chevalier de Langeron, also a Knight of Malta, who likewise had only six galleys in his command, attacked and boarded and captured a 36-gun English frigate in 1707.<sup>28</sup>

These galley actions were notable by any standard. They were a striking contrast to the record of performance, or non-performance by the Knights against the galleys of the King of Spain, or other Spanish enemies. Whatever the excellence of the record against non-Spanish enemies, the record against Spanish galleys was poor. Writing sometime in the early eighteenth century the Chevalier Barras de la Penne, himself a Knight of Malta and toward the end of his career, commander of the *Corps des Galères* in France, remarked that there had been only one combat between French

<sup>26</sup> B\* 19 Marine fol 176.

<sup>27</sup> D\* 18 Marine fol 156; B\* 142 Marine "Memoire" (1749); Roncière, VI, 410-12.

<sup>28</sup> Roncière, VI, 456-58; *Mémoires d'un protestant: Jean Marteilhe de Bergerac*, ed. by Gaston Tournier (Cevennes, 1942), pp. 94-104 *passim*.



and foreign galleys (including Spanish) in the previous sixty years, and "barely two in one hundred years."<sup>29</sup>

By 1700 Louis XIV had more than ample reason to complain of the "bad maxims" established among the commanders of his galleys, at least when they campaigned against the King of Spain. The mildness of Louis' reaction to the practice of "bad maxims" might indicate that he was not perturbed by the ineffectiveness of the Spanish campaigns of his galley officers. But that was not the case. Louis was very much dissatisfied with the service they rendered him. He wanted action, or so it would appear from the terms in which he expressed himself to the Duc de Vivonne in 1674:

I desire that you do everything possible to find and fight the vessels and galleys of Spain, and that you run risks to bring on an action of *éclat*; I would much prefer to lose some of my vessels in a vigorous action [bonne occasion] than to keep them all and do nothing at all.<sup>30</sup>

When commanders could not win him glory, he wanted them to earn stature and prestige; "*de la réputation*" was a term used in instructions to Louis' officers, as well as at the Court.

A clear indication of such sentiments was apparent in Louis' insistence that his flag be saluted, and be given "precedence" to demonstrate his superiority.<sup>31</sup> Then, as now, the salute itself was the usual method of recognition exchanged when fighting ships under different flags encountered one another at sea; it was usually rendered by the discharge of

<sup>29</sup> D<sup>1</sup> 18 Marine fol 167. The two engagements to which the Chevalier de la Penne apparently refers are the galley battle fought off Genoa in 1638, and the raising of the Franco-Catalan siege of Taragonne in 1641 in which both galleys and sailing vessels were used by both sides.

<sup>30</sup> B<sup>1</sup> 6 Marine fol 106 (1674).

<sup>31</sup> That remained the constant tenor of Louis' Spanish policy until near the end of the last decade of the seventeenth century. But on the eve of the death of the Spanish King Charles II, Louis instructed his commanders to relax their efforts to obtain marks of deference and subordination from Spanish commanders; Louis aimed to dispose the dying Charles to bequeath to the French claimant. B<sup>1</sup> 19 Marine "Memoire sur l'employ des galeres..." (1698), referring to the precarious health of the Spanish monarch and Louis' desire that his commanders be "full of circumspection" in dealings touching Spain. Fol 83. After Charles' death and the accession of the French claimant to the throne of Spain (1700-1701), long-standing enemies became allies, and French and Spanish galleys became collaborators against common enemies.



cannon, the number of *coups* on each side being equal or unequal, depending on the measure of honor and respect, or submission deemed suitable, in view of the status and prestige of the two princes or governments concerned. Flags were also lowered in salutes, and a distinction was made between salutes to sovereigns, to princes, and to the still less respectable republics. Since Louis sought evidence of submission, the salute became a delicate question of precedence and prestige. His flag, according to his instructions, was not to be lowered to any other sovereign's flag, for he maintained that no other sovereign was his equal. His flag should be acknowledged and hence saluted first, with a salute appropriate to his superiority; then, and only then, was his commander to reply with a salute of some lesser sort, appropriate to the inferior status and dignity of the foreigner.

Other sovereigns did not take kindly to Louis' pretensions to superiority and precedence. With Spain and some of the other Mediterranean powers, the question of salutes and precedence produced serious difficulties and even naval engagements. The King of Spain and his commanders were certainly unwilling to submit to Louis XIV's claims. To enforce them Louis ordered the commanders of his galleys, and other naval vessels, to use force if necessary. Thus in the winter of 1679 (a "peacetime" year) the Chevalier de Noailles, commanding Louis' galleys in the Mediterranean received the following instructions to guide his behavior in event he encountered the Spanish galleys on campaign, as Louis very much hoped he would:

My intention is that you call for the salute no matter how numerous they are, but with this difference in case they refuse: if they are approximately equal in number to [the galleys] of your command, I desire that you force them to salute; if, on the other hand, you find them so much superior that you cannot attack, you can ask for a salute, but without attempting to force them into an unequal engagement that would imperil the fleet I have confided to you.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Dep. C.P., 3 (84), *Instruction*, signé Louis, 16 dec. 1679.

The Spanish galleys were not located by Noailles that year, but such instructions were perennial in the last two decades of the century; Louis was implacable. He demanded the submission of the Spaniard; he complained with annoyance of "the ill-founded pretension of the King of Spain, who claims the equality of My Crown and His."<sup>33</sup> It was said in 1687 that the Spanish galleys, up to that date, had not rendered to Louis' galleys the desired salute,<sup>34</sup> though there had been instances when Louis' sailing vessels attacked the vessels of Spain and continued to cannonade them until they struck their flag, an act interpreted as the sought-for indication of inferiority.<sup>35</sup>

In Louis XIV's *Corps des Galères* Knights of Malta were placed in circumstances that obliged them to decide which of several conflicting loyalties to hold most high, which to subordinate. Each Knight had religious obligations to his Order and the Roman Catholic Church. He had both feudal and religious obligations that forbade him to do damage or injury to his lord, His Most Catholic Majesty, the King of Spain. But as galley officers in the service of the King of France, French-born knights owed loyalty and duty to their King. The difficulty of discharging these varied and sometimes conflicting obligations could discourage knights of Malta from the vigorous and full discharge of duty as naval officers in the service of the King of France, at least when campaigns against the King of Spain were involved.

Many Frenchmen living in the seventeenth century might have approved, and a good many in the twentieth century would likewise applaud the decision of men who held highest among several loyalties, their allegiance to their Order, Church, and Pope, and who made subordinate their loyalty to their King and France. But in either age some might question the advisability or utility of commissioning as French naval officers, men who had an obligation or compulsion to be loyal to a foreign power at the expense of the interests of the King of France. Some might even consider

<sup>33</sup> Dep. C.P., 3(84), *Instructions*, dtd 10 juin, 12 oct. 1680; similar sentiments expressed in B° 19 Marine fol 167 (1687).

<sup>34</sup> B° 19 Marine fol 166-167.

<sup>35</sup> Roncière, VI, 11-12.

that French noblemen compromised their honor and integrity when they accepted commissions in the armed forces of the Kings of France after taking holy vows and making promises on oath that could prevent them giving to their Pope and Church or to their King and France a full measure of their loyalty.

But perhaps the Knights should not be criticized unduly for their failure to follow, to the letter, their self-imposed orthodoxy. Doubtless every Knight had ideals or aims of varied sorts, and also many loyalties. Every knight, in his personal life, doubtless faced problems of loyalty that involved some degree of compromise. For them, as for most men, life was necessarily a series of compromises. Saints were rare, perhaps non-existent in the crusading Order of Saint John; only a few knights could have held perfection, or its earthly approximation, as the object of their mortal lives.

Knights deeply motivated by religiosity, by the highest aims of their Order and their Church, were well-advised perhaps to accept such counsels as those of the Chevalier d'Argens, and remain at Malta serving *la religion* with all possible fidelity. In that environment the strict execution of personal responsibilities was apt to be least onerous, and least compromised. On the other hand those who left that island and accepted service in the forces of European princes, thereby willingly diminished the external sanctions to conformity for the sake of serving personal purposes in other ways elsewhere.

Though personal aims and loyalties were apt to be as varied with the knights as they were with other men, knights did have certain qualities in common as a group. They were moulded by circumstances of birth, religion, privileged social status, and respect for family and tradition which encouraged personal and professional conduct of characteristic kinds. The knights, being recruited for the most part from nobility, were often younger sons disinherited by primogeniture. The family interests that put them out and sent them to the Church also encouraged them to follow careers as Knights. Apart from service on the galleys of the Order, one vocation that was attractive to the knights, offering and

encouraging individuality, and easily amenable to the hallowed traditions of knighthood and nobility was that of maritime *condottiere*.

Mercenary *condottiere*, many of them Knights of Malta, were the "seadogs" of the Mediterranean between the fourteenth and the seventeenth centuries. The Order offered mercenaries a base of operations and letters of marque, and the authority to use the flag of Malta in commercial ventures or privateering operations or in combinations of the two.<sup>36</sup> Enterprising knights preferring independent ventures on their own account, when based at Malta, gave their Order a commission of ten percent *ad valorem* on their prizes.<sup>37</sup> Mercenaries having the requisite resources and some reputation or distinction as fighting men, might buy galleys of their own and gather slaves and freeman crews, and set themselves in business at Malta or elsewhere as "fighting men for hire." The Marquis de Centurion based at Genoa, and the Duc de Turcy in the employ of Spain (and later France) were examples of such "entrepreneurs," the maritime counterparts of the *condottiere* of early modern armies.<sup>38</sup> Kings of realms bordering the Mediterranean employed mercenaries of this sort to help protect their coasts and to keep down "pirates," usually meaning Moslems, in the days before royal navies were established. Princes believed it cheaper to hire mercenaries than to buy, build, equip, organize, and maintain fighting forces of their own. Even the Kings of France and Spain depended on such mercenaries.

To remedy the lack of protection around French coasts, Cardinal Richelieu was counselled by a distinguished Knight of Malta, the veteran Chevalier Isaac de Razilly, to maintain a numerous fleet of galleys. The Cardinal received those counsels favorably.<sup>39</sup> But neither Richelieu nor other royal

<sup>36</sup> Jean Mathiex, "Sur la Marine marchande barbaresque au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Annales*, XIII (1958), No. 1, 88 note; Engel, 214. Commonly, commercial ventures, privateering and theft were easily confounded.

<sup>37</sup> Godechot, pp. 56-7 and *passim*.

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, Fritz Redlich, *De Praeda Militari. Looting and Booty, 1500-1815* (Wiesbaden, 1956).

<sup>39</sup> Cardinal Richelieu dispatched his own private galley, the *Cardinale*, commanded by a Knight of Malta (the Chevalier des Roches) to Malta for information concerning the construction and maintenance of galleys. Paul Masson, "Les galères de France, 1481-1781," *Ann. de la Fac. de lettres d'Aix*, XX, 1937-8, 104.

ministers provided all the protection desired by port authorities in France. In the absence of royal forces, cities and towns were sometimes moved by desperation to hire mercenary Knights of Malta to fight for them. Thus in the troubled years between 1611 and 1616 the merchants of Marseille armed galleys on their own account. They employed Jacques de Vincheguerre, a Knight of Malta, to campaign for them. His squadron and its operations cost the merchants no less than 450,000 livres, but the losses sustained by the corsairs in consequence were doubtless gratifying to the merchants.<sup>40</sup>

Knights of Malta and other mercenaries compiled impressive records in the service of France and French interests during the first two-thirds of the seventeenth century, but their renown as courageous fighting men was matched by their notoriety in matters of discipline. They proved themselves, time and again, ill-disciplined and independent, and often unreliable in the execution of the orders they received. "Belonging to great families, having powerful protectors at Court, these officers thought they could do as they pleased, and Richelieu himself sometimes showed them strange partiality."<sup>41</sup> Independent and self-interested behavior came to be expected when such officers, among them Knights of Malta, owned and managed galleys for a fee. Some might explain the mercenary conduct of such captains by suggesting that they thereby demonstrated good business sense and economic enterprise in addition to the courage and spirit they showed in their role as "fighters for hire"; economy of expenditure had a place even in the uneconomic business of war. A good eye for economy in the management of victuals, manpower and materiel might be welcome to Colbert, and even to the Grand Monarch himself, as long as the economies involved did not affect such matters as magnificence and *gloire*.

But economy could be overdone. Parsimonious practices by sea-going officers could have intolerable effects. By the 1660's private ownership and independent maintenance of materiel by mercenaries had compromised or ruined the

<sup>40</sup> Gaston Rambert, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille* (Paris, 1954), IV, pt 1 (Louis Bergasse), 84.

<sup>41</sup> C. Chabaud-Arnault, *Histoire des flottes militaires* (Paris, 1889), 11.

effectiveness of numerous naval enterprises. Commenting on this problem, and in particular about the excesses in economy practiced by commanding officers under the system of private ownership, one memoirist observed:

When galleys were owned privately, they always seemed to be defective in some respect, either because of negligence or avarice on the captain's part. . . officers proved reluctant to expose their galleys to the perils of war and [to the sea] . . . galleys often quit the fleet for lack of victuals or for other reasons, because the captains [had] over-economized. . . Many merchants were ruined for lack of payment from the galley captains, even though the captains had received their payment from the King. . . and lastly, it was found that. . . *forçats* [condemned to serve on galleys and supplied as oarsmen to the captains by the king] escaped more often, either through connivance of the captains or for other reasons [unexplained].<sup>42</sup>

Such criticisms did not apply to every single officer who held a contract or command, perhaps, but they did apply to enough of them, over the years, to convince Louis XIV and his ministers that the system should be changed.

The need for reform was underscored at mid-century by the sedition of the Fronde and was posed no less poignantly by the headstrong conduct of a certain *chevalier de Malte*, Jean Baptiste de Valbelle. As an officer Valbelle demonstrated valor, courage and initiative on many occasions, earning the nickname "Tiger" from admirers, but the "Tiger" could be rash to the point of utter irresponsibility. In 1660, instead of cooperating in the vast and secret operation for the relief of Crete that the King himself had organized, Valbelle ignored the King's intention and also his personal obligations as a knight of Malta, since the campaign was directed against the Turk; indeed, Valbelle disobeyed direct orders from his immediate commander and fellow knight, the loyal *Commandeur* de Paul, and braving the latter's cannonfire, disappeared over the horizon under a press of sail, resolved to go privateering on his own account. For this colossal piece of impudence the Chevalier de Valbelle and his subordinate fellow officers were condemned *in absentia* to the penalty of

<sup>42</sup> B<sup>e</sup> 77 Marine fols 287-88.



death; but they never suffered such severity, and were in fact restored to royal favor afterward.<sup>43</sup> But perhaps it is significant that Valbelle's defiance of authority was followed, two years later, by a major reorganization of the navy aimed at introducing better discipline and greater loyalty among the officers.

A new regime of royal ownership was decreed for the sailing navy in 1662,<sup>44</sup> and for the galleys also when they were set apart as a separate Corps in 1665. From that time forward, the King owned most of the vessels in his fleet, paid the salaries of officers and crews, and furnished victuals; understandably, the regulations and orders of the King were expected to govern the management and operation of the new royal Corps. The Marquis de Centurion, a veteran mercenary officer, who remained for a time as part of the fleet, represented an exception in this new regime of royal ownership since he managed in the 1660's to wrangle one of the old-fashioned *condottiere* contracts for himself, agreeing to supply and to command a handful of galleys that the King's minister may have viewed as a useful cost control for measuring economy in galley management; the Marquis' contract, in any case, was cancelled by his "retirement" in the early seventies. After 1665, ordinarily, the captains of royal galleys were assigned to their commands as the King saw fit; all officers under this new regime were expected to show "blind obedience, on all occasions, to persons having the honor of commanding His Majesty's forces."<sup>45</sup>

The apparent expectation of authorities that "blind obedience" should ensue from change of ownership was far from being realized in actual fact. The "new" regime was in more ways old than new. The innovation hardly went beyond the expenditure of royal funds to buy and build the vessels of the fleet. The main outlines, and most significant details of galley management were left substantially unchanged. Since

<sup>43</sup> Charles de la Roncière, *Valbelle 'Le Tigre'* (Paris, 1935), pp. 73-5, 80 and *passim*. Valbelle was not seriously self-interested in the economic sense; as he once remarked to the King: "I venture to say to Your Majesty that I have never served for money. I have always obtained from the enemies of Your Majesty all the money I need. . . . in your service honors have been my only object," pp. 149-50.

<sup>44</sup> A<sup>3</sup> 12 Marine p. 65.

<sup>45</sup> B<sup>6</sup> 5 Marine fols 201-202.



a rapid expansion of the fleet was the most important object held in view, the King had little choice but to keep the officers he had, and he continued to prefer noblemen, and knights of Malta in particular as officers, insisting that experienced officers must be recruited for the expanding fleet. By both necessity and preference, the men retained and used were imbued with knowledge and habits acquired under the system that was being "replaced." For them, discipline was difficult, especially for those officers who were accustomed to owning galleys of their own, or habituated to the methods of mercenary officers. In short, the traditions, methods and habits of mercenary condottiere were in many particulars retained and integrated into Louis' "new" *Corps des Galères*.

The methods of the mercenaries produced disciplinary problems in Louis' Corps that persisted well into the decade of the eighties, and in some instances, beyond the end of the century. In 1677 it was reported that captains of royal galleys, before departing from Marseille on campaign, or when in foreign ports, fitted out merchantmen with sailors and *forçats* taken from the galleys under their command, "thus weakening their rowing force and allowing many *forçats* to escape." In 1677 a royal *ordonnance* forbade this practice "on pain of confiscation of the vessel armed."<sup>46</sup> The practice of freighting merchant vessels for private profit was, of course, a left-over from the days when captains owned and navigated galleys of their own. The novelty of the situation consisted merely in the opportunity to man and victual merchantmen at the King's expense, a remunerative innovation for the captains. Officers apparently believed such practices to be legitimate perquisites. Their persistence was evidence that some officers had not yet adjusted to the notion of serving their King disinterestedly.

Other mercenary habits of behavior on the part of officers were equally persistent, and in many particulars traditional, but they constituted, nonetheless, insubordinate and refractory behavior on the part of the noblemen and Knights composing Louis' officer corps. Captains of galleys, for example, employed as personal valets condemnees selected from the

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<sup>46</sup> B<sup>e</sup> 9 Marine fol 49.

rowing force. This practice was made profitable for the captains by the fact that the condemnees were clothed and fed by the King; hence the captains using them as valets could pocket the funds allocated by the King to provide rations and remuneration for the eight valets allotted for the officers of each galley by the regulations of the King. Junior officers complained continually that the captains failed to share the allowances (i.e., the funds) with them, as they expected them to do since some of the valets were destined by the regulations for the use of junior officers.<sup>47</sup> Of course several valets were customary for noblemen and for officers in that age (as they have been in other periods) under both private and royal schemes of ownership; but in French galleys the temptation to have the king pay twice for valets apparently proved irresistible. No less tantalizing and irresistible for Louis' captains, apparently, were certain other opportunities for economic gain. Thus in selecting and appointing non-commissioned officers on their commands, captains took certain "small and secret remunerations" from funds provided by the King as salary for such men.<sup>48</sup> Captains not only recruited, but also paid many of the sailors, soldiers, guards and conscript oarsmen (*mariniers de rame*) on their commands, and by padding their enlistment rolls with double-duty and fictitious personnel, captains enriched themselves considerably, even though in doing so they depleted the fighting capabilities and morale of their commands.<sup>49</sup> These manipulations of authority by galley officers were systematic, and long-continued, and hence more serious in their effects than such isolated instances of mercenary irresponsibility as that involving the Sieurs de Montaulieu and de Saint Paul, who stole cannon from the royal galley on which they served and sold them secretly to the Prior of the Abbey of Saint Victor in Marseille.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Archives du Bouches du Rhosne, Fonds Coriolis, XIV E 824, *Ordonnance*, dtd 17 nov. 1688; B<sup>e</sup> 87 Marine fol 448.

<sup>48</sup> B<sup>e</sup> 87 Marine fols 424-425.

<sup>49</sup> Archives de la Marine, Toulon, 1L 119, *Ordonnance* dtd 16 fev. 1682, *ordre du roi*, dtd 8 jan. 1685; Arch B. du R., Fonds Coriolis, XIV, E 824, *Ord.* dtd 8 jan. 1686, "*Convention*", dtd 12 juin 1688, *ord.* dtd 9 mai 1689, and Coriolis XIV, E 827, *ord.*, dtd 2 jan. 1717 art. 45; B<sup>e</sup> 98 Marine fol 414; B<sup>e</sup> 19 Marine fol 229. Cf. Roncière, *Valbelle*, 44-5.

<sup>50</sup> B<sup>e</sup> 10 Marine fol 87. When discovered by authorities, the sale was

Clearly, there is no easy explanation for the behavior of Louis' officers, nor is there any simple explanation that can fully account for the failures of French galley commanders against the forces of the King of Spain. No matter how thorough the research, the possible influence of many imponderables must be allowed in the analysis of their campaigns. Such matters as weather conditions, defective materiel, human error and even accident—always important factors at sea—had influence on every campaign, and must have contributed to the failures of French campaigns. Yet it is remarkable that the interplay of factors did produce French failure quite consistently, that chance and circumstance, if that is what it was, should so frequently have favored the King of Spain while thwarting the achievement of the objects of the King of France.

Since the courage of French galley officers cannot be doubted, other factors must be relevant. Instances of indiscipline or disobedience on the part of officers were commonplace in the *Corps des Galères*. Lack of discipline was evident in the habits of self-interested economic enterprise that persisted among them, partly as traditions of *condottiere* days, partly as venal innovations aimed at taking advantage of the system of royal ownership and maintenance. Galley officers thereby sapped the efficiency, the morale and the fighting strength of the royal galley corps. The knowledge that their paper strength was not their actual strength could clearly undermine the confidence and fighting spirit of commanding officers, and is a plausible, if only a partial explanation for the prudence and "lack of enterprise" that Louis and his ministers criticized in galley officers.

Religious vows and other obligations may have had similar effects as depressants on the "fighting spirit" of officers in some campaigns. One cannot assume that all Knights of Malta in French service ignored or were insensitive to their obligations to the Order of Saint John and His Most Catholic Majesty, their lord, of Spain. The discouragements to "fighting enterprise" that came from other causes could have been

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allowed to stand; apparently the Prior kept the guns (for bells?); the officers were condemned to suffer deductions from their appointments until they had paid for them.

re-enforced by officers responding to the sanctions of their obligations.

For noblemen and Knights of Malta of the seventeenth century, it was difficult and perhaps impossible to keep both personal honor and holy vows, to be loyal to both King and Order in a Corps that included many mercenary brother-officers, and required service to a King of France, like Louis XIV, who was the enemy of Catholic Christian Spain and, frequently, the active collaborator and ally of Infidels. No Knight who was a "strict constructionist" in interpreting his personal obligations could long remain in the service of the King of France. Some did resign. No Knight could serve two such masters with fidelity. Yet scores of Knights did serve most of their professional lives in the French *Corps des Galères*, and by their numbers and prestige, Knights of Malta came to control and dominate that *Corps*.

Knights of Malta brought courage and experience to Louis' service, and conferred upon his Corps the prestige and reputation that derived from having Christian knight-hood and nobility in positions of command. The King relished being served by them, and where they were concerned he was generous and complaisant, tolerant of foibles, indulgent of unenterprising conduct that came close to disobedience, and was even willing to forgive some insubordination. But some officers brought with them, or developed in his Corps to excess, those independent and venal inclinations, those "bad maxims" that Louis lamented in his galleys, and that his officers maintained even in the face of exorcizing efforts by Colbert and Seignelay. Officers brought upon themselves and justified the reproaches of the minister, who emphasized that officers on the royal galleys "should not have other purposes in their conduct than those that honor, integrity and zeal for the service could inspire."<sup>51</sup> Though the King of France did not expect his captains to be saints, neither did he want them to be self-seeking mercenaries, or insubordinate partisans of another prince or power.

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<sup>51</sup> B<sup>o</sup> 25 Marine fol 295.